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Sent: Fri 12/8/2017 9:44:15 PM
Subject: REGION 2 NEWS RELEASE: EPA RELEASES LIST OF SUPERFUND SITES TARGETED FOR IMMEDIATE, INTENSE ATTENTION

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NEWS RELEASE
WWW.EPA.GOV/NEWSROOM

EPA RELEASES LIST OF SUPERFUND SITES TARGETED FOR IMMEDIATE, INTENSE ATTENTION

Three sites in New Jersey Named to List

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(New York, N.Y. – December 8, 2017) Today, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released the list of Superfund sites that Administrator Pruitt has targeted for immediate and intense attention. The 21 sites on the list – from across the United States – are in direct response to the Superfund Task Force Recommendations, issued this summer, calling for this list.

"By elevating these sites we are sending a message that EPA is, in fact, restoring its Superfund program to its rightful place at the center of the Agency's mission," said EPA

Administrator Scott Pruitt. "Getting toxic land sites cleaned up and revitalized is of the utmost importance to the communities across the country that are affected by these sites. I have charged the Superfund Task Force staff to immediately and intently develop plans for each of these sites to ensure they are thoughtfully addressed with urgency. By getting these sites cleaned up, EPA will continue to focus on ways we can directly improve public health and the environment for people across America."

In developing this initial list, EPA considered sites that can benefit from Administrator Pruitt's direct engagement and have identifiable actions to protect human health and the environment. These are sites requiring timely resolution of specific issues to expedite cleanup and redevelopment efforts. The list is designed to spur action at sites where opportunities exist to act quickly and comprehensively. The Administrator will receive regular updates on each of these sites.

The list is intended to be dynamic. Sites will move on and off the list as appropriate. At times, there may be more or fewer sites based on where the Administrator's attention and focus is most needed. There is no commitment of additional funding associated with a site's inclusion on the list.

EPA remains dedicated to addressing risks at all Superfund sites, not just those on the list. The Task Force Recommendations are aimed at expediting cleanup at all Superfund sites and Administrator Pruitt has set the expectation that there will be a renewed focus on accelerating work and progress at all Superfund sites across the country.

The Task Force, whose work is ongoing, has five overarching goals:

- Expediting cleanup and remediation;

- Reinvigorating cleanup and reuse efforts by potentially responsible parties;

- Encouraging private investment to facilitate cleanup and reuse;

- Promoting redevelopment and community revitalization; and

- Engaging with partners and stakeholders.

The Task Force will provide the public with regular updates as it makes progress on the Administrator's Emphasis list and other Task Force activities.

The list of sites can be found here: https://www.epa.gov/superfund/superfund-sites-targeted-immediate-intense-action

American Cyanamid

The American Cyanamid Superfund Site in Bridgewater Township, New Jersey is a 575-acre site where various previous owners manufactured numerous chemicals and pharmaceuticals for more than 90 years, resulting in the contamination of soil, groundwater and waste disposal areas referred to as impoundments that contain liquid or semi-solid wastes. The soil, groundwater and impoundments are primarily contaminated with volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-VOCs, and metals. The current owner of the site is Wyeth Holdings, LLC. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection was originally the lead for the site. In 1998, a 140-acre portion of the 575-acre site was deleted from the Superfund list and was redeveloped for commercial use. In 2009, EPA took over the lead role at the site.

In 2010, high concentrations of benzene were discovered seeping into the Raritan River. While the EPA continued its investigation of the extent of contamination on the entire site, it required Wyeth to install a system to capture groundwater and prevent the contamination from reaching the river. In 2012, the EPA selected a site-wide cleanup plan that addresses most areas of the site, including contaminated soil and groundwater at the site, as well as material in several of the waste impoundments. This cleanup work is in progress.

A plan to address the remaining portion of the site – two highly contaminated

impoundments referred to as impoundments 1 and 2 -- is still in development. Due to the unique, highly complex nature of the contaminants within impoundments 1 and 2 and their proximity to the Raritan River, the EPA required an in-depth technical pilot study to evaluate various techniques of treating the material within the two impoundments. This pilot study is complete, and the EPA is currently working on developing a proposed cleanup plan for the two impoundments. The EPA expects to propose a plan for impoundments 1 and 2 in the first half of 2018.

Berry's Creek Study Area (Ventron/Velsicol Superfund Site)

The Berry's Creek Study Area in Bergen County, New Jersey is a portion of the Ventron/Velsicol Superfund site. Berry's Creek is a tidal estuary of the Hackensack River, and its main tributaries have tide gates to limit the extent of tidal influence to the nearby communities. The site includes approximately six miles of creek, from its headwaters to the Hackensack River, the tributaries to the creek, and almost 800 acres of wetlands that are hydrologically connected to Berry's Creek. Two other federal Superfund NPL sites, the Scientific Chemical Processing/Carlstadt Site and the Universal Oil Products Site, and several NJ state hazardous waste sites, are within the Berry's Creek watershed. The Berry's Creek Study Area has been divided into four areas based on hydrological properties: Upper Berry's Creek, Middle Berry's Creek, Lower Berry's Creek, and Berry's Creek Canal. The primary contaminants of concern at the site are mercury, methyl mercury and PCBs.

Under a legal agreement with EPA, approximately 120 parties potentially responsible for contamination in the area started a detailed investigation and study of the area in 2009. The complex study work continues, but much of the work is completed and during the investigation it became clear that sediment in two areas of the creek – Upper Berry's Creek and Middle Berry's Creek – poses the most immediate and greatest risk due to high concentrations of mercury and PCBs in the top layer of sediment, which is the most accessible to fish and other wildlife. EPA subsequently asked the group of potentially responsible parties to focus on a study of those areas first and to consider interim cleanup actions to address contamination that poses the most risk first while the overall study of the contamination continues. The EPA expects to decide whether to propose an interim cleanup action in mid to late-2018.

Upper Nine Miles of the Lower Passaic River (Diamond Alkali Superfund Site)

The Diamond Alkali Superfund Site includes the former Diamond Alkali manufacturing facility located at 80-120 Lister Avenue in Newark, New Jersey, a 17-mile stretch of the Lower Passaic River from Dundee Dam to Newark Bay, and the Newark Bay Study

Area. The 17-mile stretch of the Passaic River is being addressed in segments, with the lower 8.3 miles broken out from the upper nine miles. The Newark Bay Study Area includes Newark Bay and minor portions of the lower Hackensack River, Arthur Kill and Kill van Kull. Production of DDT and other chemical products began at 80 Lister Avenue in the 1940s and ran through the 1960s, including the herbicides used in the defoliant known as "Agent Orange." These production processes also generated dioxin, which is the main contaminant of concern in the Passaic River. Other chemicals of concern include PCBs, mercury and pesticides.

In March 2016, EPA selected its cleanup plan, after receiving extensive public input, for the lower 8.3 miles of the Lower Passaic River, which contains about 90 percent of the contamination. The cleanup plan requires bank-to-bank remediation.

Under a legal agreement with EPA, a group of potentially responsible parties (PRPs) is studying the entire 17-mile stretch of the Lower Passaic River to determine an overall cleanup plan, with a focus on actions needed in the upper nine miles of the 17-mile stretch that will augment and complement the cleanup work which is already being designed for the lower 8.3 miles. Within the next month or two, the PRPS are expected to submit to EPA the remedial investigation that have been carrying out for the 17-mile stretch. EPA will also be considering, before the end of 2018, whether actions in the near-term can be taken to address contamination from the upper nine miles.

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